

A JOYFUL NOISE!

September 2011

Greetings. In my August newsletter article, I wrote that I was considering when and how to relay my experiences of being a delegate at General Synod to the church. I was considering, and still am, creating a time on Sunday either before or after worship, however I realized that not everyone who receives the newsletter is able to attend worship. So I will create a series of articles talking with you about my experiences.

Let me begin with how I became a delegate. First, a refresher course on the polity (or governance structure) of the United Church of Christ. We, in the UCC, trace our origins back to four denominations that merged along the way: Congregational, Christian, Evangelical, and Reformed. Long before these four were established denominations in the United States, we connect back to the Pilgrims who, as we recall, left Europe in search of religious freedoms so that no one could ever tell them how to worship or organize. That trait is still alive and well in the UCC. Each congregation is autonomous and yet we covenant to support each other to find common ground.

There are various structures that loosely hold us together. Each church is a part of a regional grouping called an Association. We belong to the United Northern Association of seventeen UCC churches. Associations are encouraged to gather together to plan regional events, worship, fellowship, and service projects when possible. The next larger structure is called a Conference. We belong to the Michigan Conference which has six Associations and around 150 UCC churches. Conferences are also encouraged to gather together for planning, worship, and education. Not all Conferences are alike. They are grouped, roughly, by the number of congregations. For example, there are many more UCC churches in Pennsylvania, which has four of its own Conferences. Penn Central Conference in the center of the state not including Pittsburgh or Philadelphia, has 220 UCC churches. Lastly, is the national structure of the UCC, with our headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio.

Back to our roots of independence and freedoms, the national church and/or office cannot tell the Conference how to act, nor can the Conference or the Association instruct the churches how to worship or organize. Still we continually search for covenant and common ground. One way is by gathering together for worship, fellowship, service projects, and education at General Synod. How does this work? Who gets to go? How did I become a delegate? See you next month!

- Pastor Dan Furman

September 11

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001. The tenth anniversary happens to take place on Sunday. While this Sunday, also the first after Labor Day, would normally be our Rally Sunday, the church leaders and Pastor Dan have agreed to postpone Rally day until September 19 and to respectfully observe and pause for reflection in worship that day. Please pray on that day, whether you are able to join us in worship or not, for your local fire department, police department, and all first responders to emergency calls. Please pray for continuing discussions and the seeking of unity between differing faiths. Please pray for the families of the victims for whom this day will never be the same.

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEERS -

	<u>COFFEE HOUR</u>	<u>NURSERY</u>	<u>GREETERS</u>
Sept. 4	Deacons	Chris Stone	Nancy and Larry Czap
Sept. 11	Sarah Circle and Circle IV	Carol Dye	Ginny Bowman and Anne Young
Sept. 18	Anne Young and Mary Thompson	Joanne Appelhof	Carolina and Mike Jones
Sept. 25	Church Lunch	Barbara Riegler	Cindy Schnaar and Ardith Jones
	<u>HEAD USHER</u>	Bill Bos	

NEWS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Many thanks to members and friends who have been keeping current with their pledging and donations to the church as we are in the black half-way through the year. Landscaping improvements continue around the church building. Many thanks to Joan Cooper for her hard work, Michael Jones for roto-tilling, and Chris Gehring for her help as well. Gillian Soholt has resigned as Youth Director. The Board of Christian Education is looking for replacements.

Amendment to By-laws Passes Unanimously

At the Congregational Meeting held on August 21, the proposal to amend Article IV of the By-Laws passed unanimously and is effective immediately. The amended article reads as follows:

ARTICLE IV—OFFICERS

The officers of the church shall be a moderator, vice-moderator, treasurer, financial secretary and clerk. Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church. The moderator, vice-moderator, and clerk shall be elected to a three year term, with a maximum of two terms in succession, with a one year gap in service before eligibility for reelection. The treasurer and financial secretary shall be selected by the Church Council for an indeterminate term until either his\her resignation or other inability to serve, or termination on written notice by the Church Council. If the Treasurer is a member of the Church, he\she shall also serve as an additional member of the Board of Trustees with full voice and vote. If the Treasurer is not a member of the Church, he\she shall not serve as an additional member of the Board of Trustees.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Circle I will meet on Wednesday, September 21, at the church at 1:00. A light lunch will be served then we will have a work bee and planning session for the rest of the year. Bring some cleaning supplies. We have some windows to do and a couple of rooms that have not been cleaned.

NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

Unfortunately our outing with the Youth Group to Michigan Adventure had to be canceled due to storm warnings. We will try to do this again next year.

Rally Sunday will be September 18th this year and we welcome all the young people to join us. If you have neighbors or friends with children, please give them an invitation to join us also.

GOLF TEAM

Though the summer is winding down, if your golf clubs have been calling your name, the church golf team has played once and is looking forward to more opportunities. Again, this year we will gather most often on Fridays at local golf courses. This year, if there is interest, we may play in local fundraising tournaments. If you would like to be a part of the 2011 Golf Team, please contact Pastor Dan at: pastor-dan@benzoniacongregational.org or call the church office.

THE DAN STRAUBEL MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING is scheduled for Sunday, September 18, at 1:30 p.m. at the Mistwood Golf Course in Lake Ann. The \$65 registration fee includes eighteen holes of golf with cart, lunch and barbeque dinner. Registration forms are available by calling the Habitat office at 399-0300.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to the following members of the church family!

- 1 Kay Fischer
- 3 Mary Thompson
- 8 Pete Moss
- 8 Jerry Slater
- 9 Andrew Wolowiec
- 10 Patricia Swanson
- 13 Joyce Barnes
- 14 Dan Furman
- 15 Samantha Weaver
- 15 Patricia Forrester
- 16 Betty Mitchell
- 16 Jennifer Olney
- 18 Muriel Williams
- 18 Barbara Brewer
- 19 Cath Kelder
- 19 Judy Ross
- 21 Ardith Jones
- 22 Myrt Maddock
- 22 Bob Walton
- 24 Rosemary Miller
- 28 Doc Wagner
- 30 Mary Ellen Wagner

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Roger and Becky Sattler
- 7 Jim and Dorothy Lyons
- 8 Chet and Shirley Jones
- 8 Bud and Peg Strong
- 9 Bill and Cynthia Schnarr
- 11 John and Doris Marshall
- 11 Gordon and Anna Nordbeck
- 13 Mark and Kim Weaver
- 14 Buck and Dorothy Hall
- 25 Tom and Patricia Swanson

IN OUR PRAYERS

In the month of August, three church members passed from this life to the next. Please remember in your prayers the families of Emily Haynes, Ken Miner and Chuck Dedloff. You are also invited to remember in your prayers some of our members who are home-bound, in assisted-living, or facing health concerns: Jim Uren, Marylou Patee, June Trost, Norm Stewart, John Robson, Marjorie Call, Buck and Dorothy Hall, Ruth Masters, Myrtice Maddock, Liz Ehman, Betty Peters, Barb Nason, Bernice Rankin, Mona McElderry, Trudy Collins, June Deering, Virginia Kilburn, Jo Danford, and Betty Henry.

Thank You

Thanks to Women Fellowship and all those who helped prepare food and table settings for the three funerals we've recently had at the church.

Roxane Miner writes "Many thanks for all the calls, cards, and gifts we received at Ken's death. They were truly appreciated. Thank you, most of all, for the love and concern you showed to both Ken and me during these last four years. We are truly blessed to have such a loving, caring church family."

REMINDER: If someone you know is in the hospital, please let the church office know so that Pastor Dan may visit. Due to privacy laws, hospitals no longer contact the churches to let them know church members are hospitalized. The church wants to know so that we can support you during this time of need.

UCC Sister Church of the Month

As part of our continuing efforts to work together as a community of faith, in worship we have been praying for UCC churches in our United Northern Association. You are invited in September to pray for the ongoing mission and ministries of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Gaylord.

MEMORIAL GARDEN: On the north side of our church is a beautiful memorial garden for members and friends of the church who would like their cremated ashes interred on our sacred grounds. For \$250 you may reserve a one-square foot plot as well as a memorial plaque to be placed on the stone located along the walkway. Please speak with Pastor Dan for more information.

Donations for perpetual care are also welcomed.

MUSIC SURVEY RESULTS

*38 surveys collected *284 total answers

Statement	Agree	Disagree
I like both contemporary and traditional music	26	3
I would like more contemporary music	12	3
I would like more traditional music	9	9
I would like more music	17	3
If there were more vocal/instrumental opportunities I would participate	4	14
I would like more instrumental music	20	2
I would like more soloists	19	1
I would like more special music events or guest artists	34	1
I would like more hand chime choir	14	1
I would like more chancel choir	14	6
I would be open to the idea of using a projector/screen to project music lyrics	14	10
I prefer reading music from a hymnal and/or bulletin	16	5
I would like to hear more music with children and youth	23	4

Musical instruments that should not be used in worship:

Gong, calliope, electric, rock drums, bagpipes (at least not inside).

Positive things about worship music:

- The mix of old and new music.
- The choir and special music.
- Audience participation.
- Solos.
- It truly enriches worship, presents gospel in ways words alone cannot.
- Good Old Gospel music. Plus gray hymnal is easier to follow melody and words with.
- I like the traditional three hymns and a choir offering or special music with the offering.
- Christy's leadership, and the enthusiasm and loyalty of the chancel choir.

Negative things about worship music:

- Flipping from one hymnal to another becomes difficult.
- Too many verses of one song.
- Congregation needs to sing out/participate.
- Those hymns that fit the day's message but are archaic.
- Chimes.
- Hymn choices are dreadful, not enough upbeat music (contemporary).
- The obscure hymns that people are unfamiliar with. If we have to have them, at least sing only a couple verses.
- I would prefer an updated hymnal.
- Too many unfamiliar songs, and sometimes they are too long.

How can our church improve in the area of worship music?

- Would like antiphonal psalm responses
- Would like the organ to accompany the choir on all music except special music.
- More hymns like We Shall Overcome, Trust and Obey, Peace Like a River, and God Be With You.
- Not keen on rock and contemporary.
- Projected lyrics a distraction; don't want to block altar and front window.
- More instrument music/solos.
- More contemporary and upbeat songs; only sing two verses of a song, so you could sing more songs
- Let chancel choir take more time off, have more small groups sing.
- I would like to see more/new technology and a more "hip" beat.
- One hymnal; the Renew hymnal is too hard for those who do not read music.

SEPTEMBER 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
				1 10 CMH Exercise Barn 10-12 Archive Team 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	2 12 N - LOWV Library	3
4 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	5 LABOR DAY CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 10:00 CMH - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	6 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Yoga-Barn 6:30 - Kiwanis 7:00 WAA - Barn	7 12 Noon - AA 2:00 MS Support Barn 6:30 Deacons	8 10 CMH Exercise Barn 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	9 12 N - LOWV Library	10
11 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	12 10:00 CMH - Barn 11:00 Commodities Distribution 7:00 AA - Barn	13 10:00 Yoga -Barn 7:00 WAA - Barn 7:00 Council	14 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn	15 10 CMH Exercise Barn 10-12 Archive Team 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	16 12 N - LOWV Library	17
18 RALLY SUNDAY 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	19 10:00 CMH - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	20 10:00 Yoga -Barn 5:00 Trustees 6:30 Kiwanis 7:00 WAA - Barn	21 12 Noon - AA Circle Meetings 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:30 Christian Ed	22 10 CMH Exercise Barn 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	23 12 N - LOWV Library	24
25 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	26 10:00 CMH - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	27 10:00 Yoga -Barn 7:00 WAA - Barn	28 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn	29 10 CMH Exercise Barn 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	30 10-3 UNA Meeting 12 N - LOWV Library	

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC BENZONIA, MICHIGAN

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Mary Rodriguez.. Financial Secretary
James Sheets..... Church Moderator
Christy Case Choir Director
Rosemary Miller Assistant Choir Director
Jean Edwards..... Newsletter Editor
Carol Dye & Katrina Smith..... Christian Ed Coordinators
Hope Kochis Custodian
Nancy Eggleston Secretary

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